

Washington, DC – Today, Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), a senior member of the House Budget and Ways and Means Committees, released the following statement regarding the ongoing debt ceiling debate:

“There is an air of unreality here on Capitol Hill. There are some people with no experience in government, little knowledge about the process and less regard about the outcomes who are lecturing and threatening like they are still on the campaign trail. The disconnect between this ideological rhetoric and the reality of governing is largely responsible for the hostage situation we face today with the debt ceiling, something that has been routinely increased many times under both Republican and Democratic presidents.

“This budgeting process has been reduced to sheer political theater. Some of the Republican budget proposals are so reckless and disconnected from reality that when the Republican Study Group offered a budget that went even further in cuts than Paul Ryan’s, we saw Republicans on the House floor twisting arms to get their colleagues to vote against it. While Republicans thought this proposal was great political theater, as it moved closer to passage they realized that it would hurt them if the American public understood their real agenda.

“We are now reaching this same tipping point with the debt ceiling where political theater is in danger of becoming reality. Too many of my colleagues are still acting like they are at a Tea Party rally or on a FOX News shout show. There have already been negative consequences from the reckless attempts we have seen to hold the debt ceiling hostage. American businesses are paying more and hiring less as a direct result of this showdown, and we are going to pay in the international bond market.

“We have seen this movie reel of rhetoric and gimmicks before. When Republicans took control in 1995, there was a debate on imposing a balanced budget amendment. It failed by one vote in the Senate, and it failed with a single Republican NO vote, Mark Hatfield from Oregon, who was then chairman of the Appropriations Committee. In a profile in courage, Senator Hatfield stood up and made clear to all of his colleagues that he was all in favor of balancing the budget, but not with a gimmick that would have dangerous consequences long into the future. He invited his colleagues to take action by reducing the budget, not by playing games.

“And that’s what we should do today. It’s past time that we stop this dangerous posturing. Now

is the time to stop playing games on the budget deficit."